

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

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Claims 1-17 (Cancelled)

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18. (Currently presented) A method for determining a ~~connecting~~ connection path in a communication network, comprising ~~the steps of:~~

~~in a first step,~~ determining whether a ~~suitable connecting~~ connection path to a requested destination node of the communication network is ~~already~~ stored in a second memory;

~~when, in the first step, a suitable, stored connecting path has not yet been identified if the~~
~~connection path is not stored~~ in the second memory, ~~in a second step~~ determining ~~the a suitable~~
~~connecting connection path based to the requested destination node on the basis of stored~~
network data ~~stored~~ in a first memory, ~~the network data describing that describe~~ the
communication network, and storing the ~~connecting~~ connection path in the second memory, ~~so~~
~~that it is available for a new determination of a connecting path in the first step; and~~

~~in a third step,~~ communicating path information corresponding to the ~~connecting~~
connection path ~~determined in the first or second steps~~ to network nodes that are a component
part of the ~~determined connecting~~ connection path in order to set up the ~~determined connecting~~
connection path ~~to the requested destination node.~~

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 18, further comprising:
determining whether the connection path is suitable;

wherein ~~a connecting~~ the connection path ~~to the requested destination node~~ is considered ~~to be as a suitable connecting path in the first or the second step~~ when the ~~corresponding~~ connecting connection path leads from an originating node of the communication network to the ~~requested~~ destination node and specific transmission properties for a data transmission to the destination node are met.

20. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:
storing, in the second memory, wherein a plurality of standard ~~connecting connection~~ paths to ~~specific~~ network nodes of the communication network ~~are permanently stored in advance, these being checked in the first step together with the connecting path previously determined and stored according to the second step.~~

21. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18, wherein ~~only a specific,~~ maximum plurality a limited number of determined ~~connecting connection~~ paths ~~are~~ may be stored in the second ~~step~~ memory.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, further comprising:

erasing a connection wherein given determination of a new, suitable connecting path in the second step, the connecting path previously stored longest in the second memory according to the second step is erased when a plurality of connecting paths that corresponds to the maximum plurality has already been previously determined and stored according to the second step, when the limited number of connection paths are stored in the second memory and the connection path is to be stored in the second memory.

23. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, further comprising:
erasing, from the second memory, wherein given determination of a new, suitable connecting path in the second step, the connecting path previously stored according to the second step and a connection path used least according to the third step is erased when the limited number of connection paths are stored in the second memory and the connection path is to be stored in the second memory a plurality of connecting paths that corresponds to the maximum plurality has already been previously determined and stored according to the second step.

24. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein the ~~maximum~~
limited number plurality of the connecting paths that can be stored according to the second step
is variable.

25. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24, further comprising:
counting overflow cases; and

setting the limited number based on the number of overflow cases ~~wherein the plurality of overflow cases is counted wherein a new connecting path has been determined according to the second step and is to be stored even though a plurality of connecting paths that corresponds to the maximum plurality has already been previously determined and stored according to the second step; and in that the maximum plurality of connecting paths that can be stored according to the second step is set dependent on the number of overflow cases.~~

26. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 24, further comprising:

raising the limited number for a specified period of time; and

resetting the limited number after the specified period of time

~~wherein when a new connecting path has been determined according to the second step and is to be stored even though a plurality of connecting paths that corresponds to the maximum plurality has already been previously determined and stored according to the second step, the maximum plurality of connecting paths that can be stored according to the second step is raised for a specific time span and is in turn reset after the expiration of the specific time span.~~

27. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 18 ~~wherein the first through third steps are automatically implemented by~~ further comprising:

using a control unit in a switching equipment to form ~~that forms~~ a network node of the communication network.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A switching~~ Switching equipment for determining a ~~connecting~~ connection path in a communication network, comprising:

a plurality of line units ~~respectively~~ connected to ~~at least one~~ terminal equipment or to ~~at least one further~~ switching equipment;

a first memory for storing network data that describe the communication network;

a second memory for storing ~~connecting~~ connection paths that connect the switching equipment to ~~specific~~ destination switching equipment ~~of on~~ the communication network; and

a control unit that, ~~upon reception of~~ receives a connection inquiry via one of the line units for a connection to ~~a requested~~ destination switching equipment ~~of the communication network~~; and searches the second memory for a ~~suitable connecting~~ connection path to the ~~requested~~ destination switching equipment and, if a connection path is not found ~~when it does not find a suitable connecting path~~ in the second memory, determines a ~~suitable connecting~~ connection path to the ~~requested~~ destination switching equipment based on ~~the basis of~~ the network data stored in the first memory and stores the connection path ~~it~~ in the second memory;

wherein the control unit, after finding the ~~determining a suitable connecting~~ connection path ~~stored~~ in the second memory or determining ~~a suitable connecting~~ the connection path based on the network data stored in the first memory, communicates information corresponding to the ~~connecting~~ connection path via a corresponding line unit to further switching equipment that is ~~are a component~~ part of the ~~suitable connecting~~ connection path ~~to the requested destination switching equipment~~ in order to set up the ~~connecting~~ connection path ~~to the requested destination switching equipment~~.

29. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 28, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ a third memory for storing ~~is provided in which~~ a plurality of ~~standard~~ connecting connection paths to ~~specific~~ destination switching equipment ~~of the communication network are permanently stored,~~

wherein ~~as a result of a connection inquiry for a connection to a requested destination switching equipment,~~ the control unit searches the third memory together with the second memory for a ~~suitable connecting~~ connection path to the ~~requested~~ destination switching equipment.

30. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 28, wherein the control unit monitors the ~~plurality of connecting~~ connection paths stored in the second memory to restrict the connection paths to a limited number of connection paths ~~with respect to a specific, maximum plurality.~~

31. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 30, wherein ~~after determining a new, suitable connecting path on the basis of the network data stored in the first memory,~~ the control unit erases a ~~the connecting connection~~ path ~~previously~~ stored longest in the second memory when the limited number of connection paths are stored in the second memory and the connection path is to be stored in the second memory ~~in case the control unit finds that a~~

~~plurality of connecting corresponding to the maximum plurality has already been stored in the second memory.~~

32. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 30, further comprising: wherein

a counting unit for counting a number of times a connection path stored in the second memory is used ~~frequency of employment of each connecting path stored in the second memory~~ for a connection setup ~~to a respectively requested~~ to the destination switching equipment of the communication network,

when the control unit erases a connection path that is used least when the limited number of connection paths are stored in the second memory and the connection path is to be stored in the second memory ~~whereby, after determining a new, suitable connecting path on the basis of the network data stored in the first memory, the control unit erases the connecting path previously stored in the second memory that is employed least in case the control unit finds that a plurality of connecting paths corresponding to the maximum plurality has already been stored in the second memory.~~

33. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 30, further comprising including a counting unit for counting a number of overflow cases ~~of~~ in the second memory ~~wherein, after determining a new connecting path on the basis of the network data stored in the first memory, this is to be stored in the second memory even though a plurality of~~

~~connecting paths corresponding to the maximum plurality has already been previously stored in the second memory, whereby the control unit sets the maximum plurality of and for setting the limited number based on the number of overflow cases connecting paths stored in the second memory dependent on the acquired plurality of overflow cases.~~

34. (Currently Amended) The switching equipment according to claim 30 wherein ~~after determining a new connecting path on the basis of the network data stored in the first memory and before storing the determined connecting path in the second memory,~~ the control unit increases the limited number of connection paths stored in the second memory based on the number of overflow cases

~~temporarily increases the maximum plurality of connecting paths that can be stored in the second memory when the control unit finds that a plurality of connecting paths corresponding to the maximum plurality has already been previously stored in the second memory.~~